

REMARKS

In view of the above amendment, Applicants believe the pending application is in condition for allowance. Claims 1-14, 25, and 26 are now present in this application, of which claims 1 and 11 are independent. By this amendment, claims 15-24 have been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer, claims 25 and 26 have been added, and claims 1, 3, 5, and 9-14 have been amended. Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Restriction Requirement

The Examiner previously made the Restriction Requirement final, and withdrew claims 15-24 from further consideration. By this Amendment, Applicants have canceled non-elected claims 15-24 and added new claims 25 and 26. Applicants reserve the right to file a divisional application directed to claims 15-24 at a later date if so desired. In addition, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 25 and 26 read on the elected invention.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 1st Paragraph

Claims 10, 13, 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 1st Paragraph. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner states that the original specification does not disclose a drain unit that drains “substantially all” of the water, as recited in claims 10, 13, and 14.

In order to overcome this rejection, Applicants have amended claims 10 and 13 to recite “almost all the water in the container.” Support for this amendment can be seen in Fig. 4, which shows a water supply level L2 and a water drain level L1. Once water in the container reaches the water drain level L1, almost all of the water is drained to the level of the entrance of the siphon cap 74. *See* page 8, line 20 to page 9, line 4.

Applicants respectfully submit that the claims, as amended, are fully supported by and adequately described in the written description of the invention. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 2nd Paragraph

Claims 1-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 2nd Paragraph. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner has set forth certain instances wherein the claim language is not clearly understood.

In order to overcome this rejection, Applicants have amended claims 1, 3, 5, 11, and 14 to correct each of the deficiencies specifically pointed out by the Examiner. Applicants respectfully submit that the claims, as amended, particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1, 2, 8-11, and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakamura in view of Morton; claims 3-7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakamura in view of Morton, and in further view of Edwards or Lund; and claims 12 and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nakamura in view of Morton, and in further view of Baubin or Kovich. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Complete discussions of the Examiner's rejections are set forth in the Office Action, and are not being repeated here.

Claims 1-10

While not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 1 has been amended to recite a combination of elements in a steam generator for a drum washing machine including "a container provided with a water supply port configured to be connected to a water supply tube of the laundry machine to receive water and a steam exhaustion port configured to be connected to a steam supply tube of the laundry machine to supply steam into a tub of the laundry machine to perform a laundry course," "a heater to heat the water

supplied into the container, the heater configured to be connected to and controlled by a controller of the laundry machine,” and “a drain unit having an inlet to drain water in the container.”

Applicants respectfully submit that this combination of elements as set forth in independent claim 1 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Nakamura and Morton.

Applicants respectfully submit that both references fail to show or describe the claimed steam generator. In particular, the claimed invention is a steam generator configured to be installed in a drum laundry machine and is to be controlled by a controller of the laundry machine to perform a steam laundry course. The steam generator of Nakamura is not used for a laundry course. Rather, Nakamura’s washing machine uses steam as a pre-treatment for stains, and does not use steam while performing a laundry washing course. Therefore, Nakamura does not show or describe the claimed steam generator including the controller.

None of the other references were cited for disclosing a steam generator that is configured to be connected to corresponding components of a laundry machine and to be used for a laundry course by being controlled by a controller of the laundry machine.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection of claim 1 are respectfully requested.

With regard to dependent claims 2-10, Applicants submit that claims 2-10 depend, either directly or indirectly, from independent claim 1, which is allowable for the reasons set forth above, and therefore claims 2-11 are allowable based on their dependence from claim 1, as well as for their additionally recited subject matter. Reconsideration and allowance thereof are respectfully requested.

Claims 11-14

While not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner’s rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 11 is directed to a combination of elements in a drum laundry machine including “a laundry tub,” “a laundry drum located inside the laundry tub,” “a water supply tube connected to

a water supply valve,” “a steam generator,” “means for spraying the exhausted steam directly into the drum to perform a laundry course,” and “a controller to control the drum laundry machine to treat laundry in the drum.” The steam generator includes “a container provided with a water supply port connected to the water supply tube to receive water and a steam exhaustion port to exhaust steam,” “a heater to heat the water supplied into the container,” and “a drain unit to drain water in the container until a water level of the container reaches a predetermined level.” The means for spraying is “connected to the steam exhaustion port of the steam generator.” And the controller is “configured to control the heater to generate steam.”

Applicants respectfully submit that this combination of elements as set forth in independent claim 11 is not disclosed or made obvious by the prior art of record, including Nakamura and Morton.

As noted above, Nakamura’s washing machine uses steam as a pre-treatment for stains, and does not use steam while performing a laundry washing course. Therefore, Nakamura does not show or describe the claimed drum laundry machine including the controller.

None of the other references were cited for disclosing a drum laundry machine having a steam generator that is connected to corresponding components of the drum laundry machine, and where the steam generator is used for a laundry course by being controlled by the controller of the drum laundry machine.

With regard to dependent claims 12-14, Applicants submit that claims 12-14 depend, either directly or indirectly, from independent claim 11, which is allowable for the reasons set forth above, and therefore claims 12-14 are allowable based on their dependence from claim 11, as well as for their additionally recited subject matter. Reconsideration and allowance thereof are respectfully requested.

Claims 25 and 26

Claims 25 and 26 have been added for the Examiner’s consideration. Applicants submit that claims 25 and 26 depend, either directly or indirectly, from one of independent claims 1 or 11, and are therefore allowable based on their dependence from claim 1 or 11, which are believed to be allowable.

In addition, claims 25 and 26 recite further limitations which are not disclosed or made obvious by the applied prior art references.

Consideration and allowance of claims 25-26 are respectfully requested.

Additional Cited References

Since the remaining references cited by the Examiner have not been utilized to reject the claims, but have merely been cited to show the state of the art, no comment need be made with respect thereto.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone Chad D. Wells, Registration No. 50,875, at (703) 205-8000, in the Washington, D.C. area.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

Application No. 10/757,416
Amendment dated October 6, 2008
Reply to Office Action of June 5, 2008

Docket No.: 0465-1798PUS1
Page 11

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: October 6, 2008

Respectfully submitted,

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